



**Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission
(RJMEC)**

**FINAL MINUTES OF THE 28TH MEETING OF THE RECONSTITUTED JOINT
MONITORING AND EVALUATION COMMISSION HELD ON 30TH MARCH 2023 AT
BEIJING JUBA HOTEL, SOUTH SUDAN**

The Reconstituted Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (RJMEC) convened its 28th meeting on 30th March 2023 in Juba, South Sudan. H.E. Amb. Maj Gen (rtd) Charles Tai Gituai, Interim Chairperson of the RJMEC chaired the meeting and called it to order at 09:55 am.

Agenda

1. Opening Prayers
2. Chairperson's Opening Remarks
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Adoption of the Minutes of the 27th RJMEC Meeting
5. Statement by the RJMEC Interim Chairperson
6. Report from RTGoNU
7. Report from the PFM-OC
8. Report from NTC
9. Briefing from UNMISS SRSG
10. Reports from Mechanisms on Progress of Implementation in the R-ARCSS
 - a. NCAC
 - b. CTSAMVM
 - c. JDB
 - d. SDSR Board
 - e. JMCC
 - f. DDR Commission
 - g. JRC
11. Discussions
12. Review of the Resolution
13. Date for the Next Meeting
14. A.O.B
15. Chairperson's Closing Remarks
16. Closing Prayers.

Attendance:

For the Parties to the R-ARCSS:

1. Hon. Michael Makuei Lueth (ITGoNU)
2. Hon. Mary Nawai Martin (ITGoNU)
3. Hon. Losuba Ludoru Wongo (SPLM/IO)
4. Hon. Gatwech Lam Puoch (SPLM/A - IO)
5. Hon. Peter Mabior Riing (SSOA)
6. Maj. Gen. Bior Leek Kuareng (FDs)

7. Hon. Wilson Lodiong Sebit (OPP)

For the Other South Sudanese Stakeholders and Adherents:

1. Rtd. Bishop Enock Tombe Stephen (Faith-based Leader)
2. Sheik Jaralnebi Khamis Mursal (Faith-based Leader)
3. Prof. Moses Macar (Eminent Personalities)
4. Mr. Dabek Mabior Arol (CSO Alliance)
5. Mr. Taban A. Christopher (CSO Forum)
6. Dr. Angelina Bagzuba (Academia)
7. Mrs. Anne Silvestro Tukai (Business Community)
8. Mrs. Yar Manoa (Business Community)
9. Mrs. Norah Zangabeyo (Women Bloc)
10. Ms. Nyuon Susan Sebit (Women Coalition)
11. Mr. Patrick A. Godi (Youth group)

For the Regional Guarantors:

1. Mr. Gamal Malik Ahmed Goraish (Sudan)
2. Mr. Hassan Robleh Mahamoud (Djibouti)
3. H.E. Nebil M. Abdullahi (Ethiopia)
4. Mr. Grephas Ogutu (Kenya)
5. Amb. Idule-Amoko James (Uganda)
6. Mr. Kataps Gaius K. (Nigeria)
7. Mr. Mangoba Mdluli (South Africa)
8. Mr. Ahmed Y. Hersi (IGAD)
9. Mr. Olubukola Arowubusoye (AUMISS)

For International Partners and Friends of South Sudan:

1. H.E. Linken Berryman (Norway)
2. H.E. Michael J Adler (USA)
3. H.E. Guy Warrington (UK)
4. Mr. Ma Wenjun (China)
5. H.E. Timo Olkkonen (EU)
6. Mr. Mhairi Petersen (IPF) Canada
7. Mr. Guang Cong (UNMISS)

For RJMEC Secretariat:

1. Amb. Berhanu Kebede, Chief of Staff
2. Dr. Thomson Fontaine, Deputy Chief of Staff - Strategy
3. Mr. Stephen Oola, Senior Legal, and Constitutional Affairs Advisor

For Agreement Institutions and Mechanisms:

1. Mr. James Nguen Nyol (Head of Secretariat NTC)
2. Gen. Gabriel Duop Lam (JDB)
3. Lt. Gen. Rabi Mujung Emmanuel (JDB)
4. Maj. Gen. Charles Machieng Kuol (Head of JDB Secretariat)
5. Hon. Angelina Teny (SDSR Board Chairperson)

6. Mr. Angelo Madut (Head of SDSR Board Secretariat)
7. Maj. Gen Pal Yiech Lam (Deputy Head of JMCC Secretariat)
8. Lt. Gen. Wesley Welebe Samson (JTSC)
9. Lt. Gen. Dr. Olaw Adiang Nyijok (JTSC)
10. Col. George Mabe Peter (JTSC)
11. Lt. Gen. Asrat Denero (Chairperson CTSAMVM)
12. Hon. Regina Kaba (DDR Deputy Chairperson)
13. Hon. Justice James Ogoola (Chairperson JRC)
14. Ms. Justice Ajonye Perpetua Paya (Head of Secretariat JRC)

Observers:

1. H.E. Erdem Mutaf (Turkiye)
2. Mr. Leon Kohl (Germany)
3. H.E. Tsutsumi Naohiro (Japan)
4. Mr. Georg Stein (Switzerland)
5. Mr. Mohamed Elbadry (Egypt)
6. Ms. Fenny Hum (UN Women)
7. Ms. Catherine Waliaula (UNDP)
8. Mr. Flavio Soares da Gama (AfDB)
9. Lt. Col. Nathan Akankunda (SSM)
10. Amb. Aida Wande (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation)

Min. 01/28/23: Opening Prayers

1. Bishop Emeritus Enock Tombe Stephen and Sheik Jaralnebi Khamis Mursal led the opening prayers.

Min. 02/28/23: Chairperson's Opening Remarks

2. The Chairperson welcomed the RJMEC members to the 28th monthly meeting.

Min. 03/28/23: Adoption of the Agenda

3. The agenda was adopted without any amendments.

Min. 04/28/23: Adoption of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

4. The draft minutes of the 28th RJMEC meeting was reviewed and adopted with an amendment on the phrase "Ngok-Dinka".

Min. 05/28/23 Statement by the RJMEC Interim Chairperson

5. The RJMEC Interim Chairperson welcomed members and highlighting the beginning of the 24-month extended Transitional Period, as per the RTGoNU Roadmap the following recommendations to the RTGoNU:
 - 5.1 continue to consult and dialogue in the spirit of collegial collaboration and consensus in order to address emerging issues during implementation of the R-ARCSS;

- 5.2 provide adequate and predictable funding for the implementation of the critical pending tasks of the Agreement, in particular, the constitution making and electoral processes and completion of the unification of forces;
- 5.3 operationalize all the enacted laws, establish all institutions required by the Constitution-Making Process Act 2022, and expedite the enactment of the National Elections Bill;
- 5.4 expedite the redeployment of the graduated forces, commence Phase II of the unification of forces and begin Demobilisation, Disarmament, and Reintegration (DDR);
- 5.5 complete the process of drafting the CTRH and CRA legislation and submit it to the reconstituted TNL for enactment and engage the AU Commission to discuss modalities for the establishment of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan;
- 5.6 underscored the need to redouble the efforts, encourage and support the RTGoNU to accelerate the pace of implementation going forward, in order to provide a much-needed impetus to the peace process.

Min. 06/28/23: Report from the RTGoNU

6. The representative of the RTGoNU informed the plenary as follows:
 - 6.1. the High-Level Standing Committee for the implementation of the R-ARCSS in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs (MoJCA) were reconstituting the National Constitutional Review Commission (NCRC). It was expected that the Constitutional Development Committee (CDC) and the other various organs related to the constitutional making process would immediately be established and operationalized. The Permanent Constitution will be delivered in a shorter time because all the documentation are readily available;
 - 6.2. the High-Level Standing Committee was reconstituting the Political Parties Council (PPC) so that political parties start to register and commence their political work in preparation for elections.
 - 6.3. the Committee and MoJCA were planning an international conference to inform and enrich the draft bill for the establishment of the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing (CTRH) during the second week of April 2023. Work was also ongoing on the draft Compensation and Reparation Authority (CRA) Bill;
 - 6.4. the Presidency directed the National Transitional Committee (NTC) and the Joint Defense Board (JDB) to expedite the completion of Phase 1 of unification of forces, including the organisation of the second echelon of the command structures of all the security organs. Once finalized, Phase II cantonment of the armed opposition and barracking of the SSPDF will commence. The forces to be cantoned from the opposition would hand-in their weapons as agreed;
 - 6.5. discussions were underway to finally resolve the political development relating to the swapping of the Ministry of Defense and Veterans Affairs and the Ministry of Interior between the ITGoNU and the SPLM/A-IO. The incident that involved the looting of World Food Programme Humanitarian Assistance supplies is regrettable. The RTGoNU maintains that it is not its policy to engage or encourage individuals to carry out such acts. However, under the current living conditions, such acts were likely to occur. The RTGoNU undertakes to bring the culprits to book.

Min. 07/28/23: Briefing from the PFM-OC

7. The Chairperson of the Public Financial Management Oversight Committee (PFM-OC) and Minister of Finance and Planning (MoFP) did not attend the plenary neither did the Committee submit a report to the RJMEC.

Min. 08/28/23: Briefing from the NTC

8. A representative from NTC reported as follows:
 - 8.1 the NTC faced a funding challenge due to the economic crisis in South Sudan and failed to undertake its activities since the last plenary. It lacked funds to implement TSA activities, DDR for the ex-combatants, to pay incentives and operating cost for the security mechanisms and to pay debts. The Ministry of Finance and Planning needed to avail funds earmarked for DDR, deployment, and commencement of Phase II of the NUF;
 - 8.2 the NTC Chairperson coordinated and facilitated a meeting on 14th April 2023 with the security mechanisms to expedite the formation of lower and middle echelons of the organised forces based on the responsibility sharing ratio as per the R-ARCSS. He also engaged the Presidency in finding an amicable solution on the political stalemate inadvertently caused by the Presidential Republican Decree of March 3rd, 2023, which removed the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs and swapped the Ministries of Defence and Interior;
 - 8.3 the RTGoNU needs to resolve the political stalemate between the ITGoNU (SPLM-IG) and SPLM/A-IO over the removal of the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs and swapping of the Ministries of Defence and Interior; and the RTGoNU, Regional Guarantors, and international partners need to avail funds for implementing the R-ARCSS. Also, the Ministry of Finance and Planning needs to release funds to the NTC to pay incentives and debt owed to hotels and for food, and non-food items.

Min. 09/28/23: Briefing from UNMISS DSRSG

9. In his briefing to the plenary, the DSRSG:
 - 9.1 commended the Parties for reaching a consensus on the power-sharing formula for the mid-level command of the NUF and encouraged them to provide the necessary adequate resources for the sustenance and redeployment of the graduated troops and commencement of Phase 2. Further, welcomed the approval of the amended National Security Service Bill, the Public Financial Management and Accountability Bill, the Bank of South Sudan Bill, and the Banking Bill by the Council of Ministers;
 - 9.2 welcomed the resumption of the talks between the RTGoNU and the Non-Signatory South Sudanese Opposition Group (NSSOG) under the auspices of the Community of Sant'Edigio and encouraged them to make concrete progress;
 - 9.3 raised concern on the limited progress and delays in the implementation of the R-ARCSS following the removal of the Minister of Defense and swapping the Defense and Interior ministries between the ITGoNU and the SPLM/A-IO. He commended Prime Minister Ahmed Abiy of Ethiopia and the high-level delegation of Sudan for timely engagements with the parties to encourage them to reach consensus and further appreciated the consistent and timely efforts by the IGAD guarantors;

- 9.4 appealed to the parties to maintain collaboration and consensus-building in the letter and spirit of the R-ARCSS to complete the transitional period as promised in the Roadmap;
- 9.5 called upon the RTGoNU to make the necessary budgetary allocations to the Agreement Institutions and Mechanisms to ensure they achieve their critical and time-bound function;
- 9.6 urged for expeditious adoption of the National Elections Bill to allow the reconstitution of the National Elections Commission and, in turn, the commencement of the electoral preparations. Underscored the need for operationalization of the Political Parties Council so that the parties can begin registration and preparation for elections. He encouraged the RTGoNU to reconstitute the National Constitutional Review Commission, other constitution-related implementing bodies;
- 9.7 raised concerns regarding access impediments which halted humanitarian efforts in Jonglei State arising from attacks on humanitarian convoys leading to death of two staff, and due to heavy rains;
- 9.8 the Ministry of Health declared an outbreak of cholera in Malakal where laboratory-confirmed cases were among patients in the PoC site;
- 9.9 commended the President for the visit to the greater Bahr el Ghazal region which created avenues for lasting peace in the Abyei region. Further commended the Dinka Ngok and the Dinka Twic communities for their open and frank discussions with the President on the border disputes and for agreeing to a set of commitments to address them. All national actors to genuinely engage at the local and national levels to resolve intercommunal conflicts to assure citizens of their safety, security, and justice;
- 9.10 informed that the UNSC renewed the UNMISS mandate on 15 March 2023 with the same four pillars: protection of civilians; creation of conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance; supporting the implementation of R-ARCSS; and, monitoring, investigating and reporting on violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of human rights. The Council also strengthened the UNMISS mandate on the protection of civilians. The Council called on the Mission to support conducive conditions for civic and political space ahead of the elections, transitional security arrangements, and an inclusive constitutional review process; and
- 9.11 reiterated UNMISS continued collaboration with IGAD, AU, and RJMEC, along with the broader international community to assist South Sudan in support of the ongoing political and peace processes.

Min. 10/28/23: Reports from Mechanisms on progress in implementation of the R-ARCSS:

10. The following are the reports from the Agreement Institutions and Mechanisms:

Report from the PFM -OC Chairperson

10.1 The Chairperson of the Public Financial Management Oversight Committee (PFM-OC) and Minister of Finance and Planning (MoFP) did not attend the 28th plenary neither did the Committee submit its report.

Report from the NCAC

10.2 The NCAC Chairperson was not present at the meeting and there was no report submitted to the plenary.

Report from the CTSAMVM Chairperson

10.3 The CTSAMVM chairperson reported to the plenary as follows:

10.3.1 CTSAMVM is severely constrained from monitoring the ceasefire due to an ongoing strike by the national monitors;

10.3.2 The following are alleged potential violations:

10.3.2.1 parties to conflict in Upper Nile State and other parts of the country that were yet to be verified;

10.3.2.2 the SSPDF allied Agwelek forces mobilised and moved a significant number of forces further south to Wau Shilluk Payam, Malakal County using barges;

10.3.2.3 alleged buildup of Agwelek forces in Pagak, Panyikang County;

10.3.2.4 allegations that the Agwelek forces were being supported by the SSPDF including with fuel for the barges and other war materials. Engagements with SSPDF indicated that the Agwelek forces were under control and any movement south towards Atar should be prevented. In response to the allegation, SPLM/A-IO were allegedly mobilizing the "White Army" in northern parts of Jonglei and southern parts of Upper Nile as part of reinforcing its positions where the Agwelek attacks were expected. There were allegations that all these activities had support from Juba;

10.4 the Rome peace process was being restarted and the best outcomes was expected. Intercommunal violence was still a significant threat to security, with flashpoints being in both Jonglei and Greater Pibor Administrative Area (since the attack of GPAA by the Lou-Nuer in 2022/2023), Warrap and Lake States; and

10.5 the strike of the national monitors significantly affected CTSAMVM's monitoring and verification of on-going allegations. The Parties need to direct their national monitors to resume work as the mechanism engages in resolving the issue. The R-ARCSS Security Mechanisms and relevant Ministries to urgently provide CTSAMVM with detailed plans for the redeployment of the NUF phase I forces as well as detailed plans for the cantonment and training of NUF Phase II.

Report from the JDB Head of Secretariat

10.6 The Head of the JDB Secretariat presented the following report to the plenary:

10.6.1 the Parties reached an agreement on the unification of the second tier/echelons of the command across the security institutions on the ratio of 60:30:10 for ITGoNU, SPLA-IO, and SSOA respectively. JDB provided support to the principals in order for the President to make decisions on appointments to various positions in the second layer of the command structure across the security institutions;

10.6.2 JDB was making redeployment plans in collaborations with the six security institutions: the South Sudan Peoples' Defence Forces (SSPDF), the South Sudan National Police Service (SSNPS), the National Security Service, the Prisons Service, the Civil Defence Service, and the Wildlife Service. Six specialised agency-based teams to travel to the training centres across the country to make arrangements for the redeployment. The JDB submitted a budget to NTC for the redeployment and will embark on it once funds are released;

10.6.3 RTGoNU needs to restore office premises used by the Security Mechanisms in their day-to-day activities or provide alternative office so they could perform their duties as expected.

Report from the SDSR Board Chairperson

10.7 The SDSR Board completed the drafting of the Defence White Paper and five other documents. The Board planned to conduct a workshop to be supported by the UNMISS. Since 2022, the SDSR Board has not received funding to implement its activities. The Board was expected to meet early March -2023, however, it failed to meet.

Report from the Joint Transitional Security Committee (JTSC) Chairperson

10.8 The JTSC Co-Chairperson provided the following reports to the plenary:

10.8.1 the JTSC started preparations for reassessment of the conditions of the training centres to ascertain their readiness for Phase II training. The JDB also started preparations for transportation and redeployment of Phase I NUF. The Committee had embarked on formulating and review of the training plan, budget, preparations for the prepositioning of food in all training centres, once approved by NTC;

10.8.2 challenges faced by the Committee include:

10.8.2.1 insufficient and inconsistent funding to implement tasks as planned;

10.8.2.2 prolonged stay of the NUF in the training centres after graduation making it difficult to reassess the training centres in preparations for Phase II;

10.8.2.3 lack of adequate supplies of food and medicine in the training centres to sustain the graduated forces yet to be deployed;

10.8.2.4 poor infrastructure facilities due to insufficient funds to fully prepare the centres;

10.8.2.5 lack of salaries and incentives as per approved budget for the medical corps, instructors, TCPFs, NUFs and support staff which worsened the livelihood and working conditions of both the forces and staff; and

10.8.2.6 the RTGoNU to avail funds for food items for the graduated forces in the training centres. The JDB to accelerate and speed up the post-graduation deployment plan for the NUFs to allow JTSC to start preparation for Phase II. The Regional and International Partners and Friends of South Sudan to enhance their pledges of financial and in-kind support to the full implementation of the TSA.

Report from the Joint Military Ceasefire Commission (JMCC) Co-chairperson

10.9 The Co-Chairperson of the JMCC reported that JMCC finalized the activities of Phase I NUF and budgetary planning for the preparations of Phase II NUF and submitted the budget for Phase II to the NTC. However, it has not received funds to conduct the planned activities. Lack of funding, shortage of food and medicine in the cantonment and barracks, lack of accommodation for all the JMCC members remain a challenge. Also, some cantonment sites such as Lieng, Jekou/Turu and Mirmir were still under occupation by the SSPDF. The NTC needs to avail funds for the implementation of its activities before the rainy season commences. RJMEC, CTSAMVM, and

UNMISS to consider assisting the JMCC to airlift the peace mechanisms teams for visitation of the forces in their assembly points.

Report from the DDR Commission Chairperson

- 10.10 The Deputy Chairperson of the DDR Commission informed the plenary that there was no progress made by the Commission since it had not received funding from its inception to date. However, the Commission had planned to implement a Community Violence Reduction (CVR), a pilot project in Western Bar el Ghazal State to be supported by France and UNMISS as an implementing partner. An agreement for the implementation of the project was signed between the DDR Commission and UNDP and was expected to be launched in April 2023. Additionally, the Commission submitted plans and budget to the NTC for the Phase II of NUF. However, the Commission faced challenges of not owning any facilities to assemble the ex-combatants who were still at the cantonment site and training centres after the graduation of Phase I. The RTGoNU to support the Commission and to engage stakeholders to support the implementation of the CVR program to stabilize security for classical DDR program.

Report from the JRC Head of Secretariat

- 10.11 The *ad hoc* JRC continued to discharge its mandate through five working sub-committees. The subcommittees completed their respective assignments, towards development of the methodological tools to be applied to receive views and opinions on reforms of the judiciary from the public and stakeholders during crucial phase of the public hearing and stakeholder consultations. The Secretariat also prepared a revised budget estimate, work plan and travel schedule for the consultations to be undertaken in the States and Administrative Areas in South Sudan as well as the refugee camps in neighbouring countries. So far, the Committee held consultations with key stakeholders in the process to receive opinions and views on reforms of the judiciary; and
- 10.12 The Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson planned to pay a courtesy to the leadership of the reconstituted TNLA early April 2023. Moreover, she shared concerns on some slight reluctance that may exist within some stakeholders from views and opinions on reforms of the Judiciary that had been sought. She thanked the RTGoNU, RJMEC, regional guarantors and International Partners for their support to the JRC in various critical areas in the process of reforms of the Judiciary.

Min. 11/28/23: Discussions on Statements and Reports

11. Members welcomed the statement of the RJMEC Chairperson and reports from the RTGoNU the SRSG, Agreement Institutions and Mechanisms. In addition, they raised the following matters during discussions:
- 11.1 **RJMEC:** Requested for a response from the RTGoNU on critical issues raised in most reports from both the Agreement Institutions and Mechanisms such as on funding, election legal framework that are yet to be operationalised, and the constitution-making process. Took note of the statement made by His Excellency the President of the Republic that there will be no more extension of the R-ARCSS and that elections would be held in December 2024.
- 11.2 **Troika:** Underscored the need for the South Sudan leaders to focus on meeting their commitments to the people of South Sudan to implement the R-ARCSS and make sustained, tangible progress to completing the transition to a permanent, elected government acceptable to

the people of South Sudan. In addition, the Troika representative raised concerns that the implementation of the R-ARCSS was not progressing with the necessary political will, as was assured by the RTGoNU when it obtained a two-year extension of the transitional period. Recalled President Kiir's statement at the opening of the RTNLA that there would be no more extensions and that elections would be held as scheduled. Troika renewed its call for the RTGoNU to hold accountable, those who continue to incite violence and engage in intimidation to meet their own political aims and objectives; called on the RTGoNU to take concrete actions, propelled by a real and determined sense of urgency with statements of intent to be quickly transformed into the real world; took note of the March 3 announcement of changes in ministerial responsibility and reports that discussions were underway on the way forward. Troika reiterated that it takes no position on the specifics of the matter but that the engagement and consultations of the RTGoNU with the parties were critical to achieving that outcome without further delays. Finally, the parties were encouraged to demonstrate a shared commitment to move forward together with urgency to achieve lasting peace for South Sudan;

- 11.3 **FDs:** Sought for clarifications from the NTC on whether it had received any funding from the RTGoNU and if not, they should state as such. Asked the JDB to clarify as per its report if the second echelon of the army would be redeployed once a decision by the principals is reached on the appointment of the various positions. He also wanted to know which authority between the JDB, NTC Chairperson and the Presidency was responsible for the redeployment. Further, in case it was the Presidency and a redeployed officer from the various positions commit an offence against the military law conduct, he ought to know who would be responsible for removing the officer. According to military principles, whoever takes the decision on redeployment has the authority to remove. He underscored the significance of having a national army versus a political party's army going forward. Also, the member asked for clarification from the JDB on the allegations by CTSAMVM that SSPDF was supporting the Agwelek while the SPLA-IO were mobilising the White army in Jonglei and Upper Nile states. The CTSAMVM's report on allegation of mistreatment of civilians in Central Equatoria states failed to clearly state the specific areas where the incidents occurred and reasons behind the mistreatment. CTSAMVM needed to elaborate on the allegation, including on SPLA- IO reinforcement of the position of the White Army and who was supporting the Agwelek forces.
- 11.4 **Norway:** The government of the Royal Kingdom of Norway will continue to fund CTSAMVM, making Norway the second largest donor to CTSAMVM. The Embassy was also considering increasing the level of its support this year. However, there are concerns about the ability of CTSAMVM to deliver on its mandate due to lack of support to national monitors, which is the responsibility of the RTGoNU. This is a very critical time for the RTGoNU to deliver on its responsibilities and Norway's continued support to CTSAMVM will depend on the RTGoNU doing the same.
- 11.5 **NTC:** Clarified that the NTC had not received any funding from the RTGoNU with an exception to the funding received in February for the graduation of Phase I of the NUF.
- 11.6 **JDB representative:** The principals were to provide the list of the second echelon to be submitted to the President as the commissioning authority and Commander-in-Chief (CiC) of the SSPDF. Once the commissioning is done, the second Phase will commence. The redeployment therefore would be under the prerogative of the CDF through the CiC to endorse/amend it. This process of the CDF would be done in consultation with the JDB who will submit the list for redeployment of the second echelon of the NUF. With regards to the allegation made in the CTSAMVM report, the Board denied the allegation that SSPDF was supporting the Agwelek forces and would prefer

to wait for the verified report from the CTSAMVM. The Agwelek forces had broken from the SPLMA/-IO with an understanding that the Agreement entered between the RTGoNU and the Agwelek was binding. However, no progress had been made on the Agwelek forces being integrated to the SSPDF.

- 11.7 **JDB Co-Chairperson:** Before discussing the professionalism of the army, JDB has been trying to unify the forces then deal with the modality of the army later. In relation to the unification of the second echelons, Parties agreed on a proposed structure of the army by the SPLA-IO which was adapted by both the NTC and JDB. In April 2022, the principals agreed on harmonisation of the middle and lower echelons at 60:40 ratio for the SSPDF:Opposition. The main critical issue for the JDB has been redeployment, and removal of the forces from the party-controlled areas. Step two would be redeployment of the security forces, which is the movement of the forces to cantonment sites and barracks. However, the Board faced funding challenges to implement the pending critical tasks. The allegation made by CTSAMVM that SPLM/A-IO reinforced and mobilised the White Army in the greater Upper Nile is not proven. As the Deputy CDF and Acting Chief of Staff of the SPLA-IO who has a responsibility of all the forces which are not unified and still in cantonment site, especially those who misbehave, they intervene to stop. His visit to Upper Nile State in February was to engage the leaders to stop the White Army in the Akwach area from retaliating against the Agwelek and SSPDF forces. He also addressed the issue of abduction by urging the forces to return the abducted women and children from the Shilluk Kingdom in Upper Nile State. The abducted children would be taken back to their parents.
- 11.8 **CTSAMVM:** Confirmed the allegation on mistreatment of civilians in Central Equatoria by the SSPDF, highlighting that the incident was investigated by the national monitors before their boycott. Once the national monitors resume work, investigation of the incident would continue. On the Agwelek forces, their movement was reported by the CTSAMVM MVT in Malakal. There is an allegation that Agwelek forces were being supported by the SSPDF. Further clarified that when an incident happens CTSAMVM is expected to report the incident and submit the investigated report to the RJMEC plenary.
- 11.9 **EU:** The Deputy Director General for the European Union Office for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid, Mr Karla, visited Juba. The visit provided a context of the announcement by the Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Office, (ECHO) of the EU humanitarian aid package for the wider Horn of Africa area of more than €300 million, with South Sudan receiving €82 million. This meant that the level of EU humanitarian aid to South Sudan remained the same as it had been in previous years. This came against the backdrop of continuation of severe humanitarian needs. For a long time, the international community shouldered the burden of rendering humanitarian aid to South Sudan. The EU will maintain its level of support in terms of humanitarian aid and development cooperation assistance. Additionally, the humanitarian situation is dependent on the security situation prevailing in the country and floods. There is no solution to the humanitarian situation without correctly addressing associated impediments: attacks on humanitarian aid workers and their assets. The RTGoNU needs to tackle and guarantee security for humanitarian aid deliveries and personnel. Finally, it should be noted that the local and regional security situation are inseparable from the overall national peace process. There is therefore a need for renewed commitments in political and financial terms, both to RJMEC and CTSAMVM. The support from the government of Norway to CTSAMVM is commendable. The EU continues to assess and observe the commitment and interest that national stakeholders have towards RJMEC and CTSAMVM and the overall scaffolding of the peace process. Finally, the EU is willing and committed to supporting the R-ARCSS. Notwithstanding the agreement on the middle ranks of the NUF and some legal steps taken, there are concerns about slow

implementation of the R-ARCSS. Took note of the President's commitment that there would not be further extension but stressed the need for accelerated progress in the implementation, including respect for deadlines, notably in terms of the constitutional process and also in preparation for elections.

- 11.10 **RJMEC:** Thanked the EU for its continued humanitarian and development support to the R-ARCSS and its mechanisms as well as Norway, Japan, and the rest of the partners for their support.
- 11.11 **CSO Forum:** Took note of the challenges shared by the JTSC regarding the redeployment of the graduated NUF of Phase I, noting the need for the community around the training areas where Phase I NUF to be safeguarded. Also, it is important to have command and control of the forces and to expedite their redeployment. The member urged for operationalisation of the constitution-making process and to meet deadlines for the elections. By now, the reconstitution of the National Elections Commission and the Political Parties Council should have taken place.
- 11.12 **Sudan:** Reiterated his country's support to the South Sudan peace process and underscored that the process was owned by the people and the Parties to the R-ARCSS. As IGAD, they will continue with their support and engagements with the Parties to work out any difficulties that may delay the implementation of the R-ARCSS. Sudan as the IGAD Chairperson was engaging and mobilising efforts of the IGAD member states to resolve the issue of CTSAMVM support as well as the recent political development that occurred due to the Presidential Decree of March 3rd. Sudan encouraged the Parties to resolve the matter by themselves as a sovereign country and reach an agreement. He reported on the visits of the IGAD leadership, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, and a member of the Sudan Sovereignty Council Gen. Kapashi who was sent by the IGAD Chairperson to Juba accompanied by the Minister of Defence and Minister of Foreign Affairs to facilitate and provide support to the parties. Informed that Sudan was still consult with other IGAD members on how they could provide support to the Republic of South Sudan to achieve peace and should not be interpreted otherwise.
- 11.13 **Ethiopia:** Thanked the chair for his comprehensive report, as well as RTGoNU and the mechanisms and the positive contributions of all the RJMEC members for an effective implementation of the R-ARCSS. As agreed, that 2023 should be a critical and important year for an effective implementation of the R-ARCSS to be concluded by fair and transparent elections. Ethiopia as an IGAD member, is committed to support the R-ARCSS. He appreciated the commitment of President Salva Kiir Mayardit for reaffirming his commitment and that of his government to implement the R-ARCSS and that there would be no extension of the R-ARCSS at the end of the transition. The Prime Minister of Ethiopia visited Juba to discuss bilateral, regional IGAD issues and the R-ARCSS implementation. The visit was very fruitful and focused on home-made solution in bringing a solution to the recent political development by holding separate meetings with the President, FVP and the two principals. Ethiopia is committed to the RJMEC platform, and the initiative taken by Sudan as Chairperson of the IGAD in working with the Ministry in charge of refugees.
- 11.14 **RTGoNU:** The extension commenced on the 23rd of February 2023. Despite the slow pace, the RTGoNU is moving in the right direction and would finalise the implementation as planned. Some provisions and tasks of the R-ARCSS would continue past the end of the Transitional Period, e.g., activities of the SDSR Board. The reorganisation for Phase II and the redeployment of the middle and lower echelon of the regular forces would not be bound by the military and the army processes as is expected but by a political arrangement. However, raised his concern, on the redeployment of the forces which was not clear as shared by the JDB that the NUF were graduated with sticks, and asked if they should be redeployed with sticks. He expected the JDB to be clear on its plan

for redeploying the forces and further appealed to the plenary to stand with the government on the lifting of the arms embargo to be able to redeploy the forces as planned. There is need to be strategic on how the forces would be redeployed without arms which was a necessity. It was unfortunate that the RTGoNU was still challenged with resources to support the mechanisms such as the DDR Commission. The international community needs to come on board to support the Commission which was very important and needed to be done alongside with the redeployment of the forces.

- 11.15 The RTGoNU made progress by agreeing on the middle and lower echelon of the army. However, the CTSAMVM's report on allegations which were not thoroughly investigated cannot be discussed by the plenary. Mechanisms should report on the allegations which are verified. The huge amount of funding declared by the EU and channelled to the NGOs to support the humanitarian needs are neither reported nor accounted for to the RTGoNU. In that regard, the international partners should not expect the RTGoNU to be accountable or applaud the support.
- 11.16 On the attacks of the humanitarian convoys, South Sudan is vast. The RTGoNU was expected to protect the humanitarian convoys; however, the humanitarian agencies should accept the 's offer to escort the convoys to protect from attacks. South Sudan faces hunger in some parts of the country, whereby it would be expected that the affected communities would attack the convoys carrying food. He narrated a solution to be adopted by the WFP in South Sudan, including their plan towards reducing attacks and looting of the food earmarked for those in needs. The President is committed to implement the critical benchmarks of the R-ARCSS and that the country would not go back to war. He appealed to the international community to support the RTGoNU in all areas where there are gaps.
- 11.17 **Women Bloc:** Appealed to the commanders who were training the forces to train them to be a unified national army which would protect the people and the constitution of the Republic of South Sudan. The international community needs to support the DDR process so that the ex-combatants would refrain from becoming peace spoilers and attackers on the roads. Conducting democratic elections would put an end to child abduction and conflict. Finally, there is need for expeditious redeployment of forces.
- 11.18 **Business Community:** Commended the RTGoNU on the political maturity demonstrated. The attacks, cattle raiding, and inter-communal violence were a result of economic hardship and livelihood needs. This calls for economic reforms and for donors to support the country. She commended the President for the decision to convene an economic conference. however, conference needs to be planned well, in an inclusive manner to enable the people of South Sudan to benefit from it. Some parts of the country face hunger such as Bhar el Ghazal where people were internally displaced by floods. On its part, the RTGoNU needs to plan and budget for the livelihood of the people.
- 11.19 **Academia:** The mechanism implementing the R-ARCSS were severely constrained with funding. In addition, she commended the RTGoNU for its statement affirming that the R-ARCSS will not be extended. Supplementary budget for funding for the implementation of the R-ARCSS is a matter that can be tabled before RTNLA for approval. Partners should also consider supporting the Agreement Institutions and Mechanisms to accomplish their critical tasks. Furthermore, there is need to ensure the 35% threshold for participation of women in the executive is observed, where a woman is removed, a woman should be appointed as a replacement. For instance, all stakeholders should be represented in the reconstituted NCRC as per the law, a mechanism responsible for overseeing the Permanent Constitution-making process. Finally, she asked the

RTGoNU about its deliverable measures/ strategy for mobilisation of funds and resources to ensure election is achieved in 2024.

- 11.20 **Youth:** Much as the plenary continues to push for a stable and peaceful country, the holdout groups should be brought on board by the RTGoNU. He wondered where the status of the Rome talks had reached. The impasse regarding the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs needed to be resolved by the concerned parties. In that regard, he sought for clarity on whether the concerned parties had agreed on the swapping of the two Ministries to clear the rumours and contradictory statements on the issue.
- 11.21 **SDSR-Board:** RJMEC needed to appeal for funding for all Agreement institutions and mechanisms and not for CTSAMVM alone. South Sudanese need to be honest with themselves especially when discussing issues of elections in 2024 as only 22 months are remaining, and critical tasks are unimplemented. The parties require political will, openness, and the truth on what they are able to achieve. The NTC seemed to have funding for other activities but not have funds for vital activities for the mechanisms. Dissemination of the R-ARCSS, which is the activity of NTC, has not been implemented. RJMEC should consider finding a platform/forum whereby the people of South Sudan can be enlightened on progress made, critical challenges facing the R-ARCSS, critical tasks not implemented and come up with solutions for those not implemented.
- 11.22 **SPLM/A-IO:** Thanked members for their warm welcome to the august house. Having been a member of the Security Supervision Mechanisms (SSM) before becoming a Minister, he shared the same concerns on the challenges expressed by the Mechanisms in logistics as real. He commended the Partners for their support to the peace process, including IGAD members, in particular Sudan and Ethiopia for their engagements with the principals on the recent political development in South Sudan on the removal of the Minister of Defence and the swapping of the Ministries of Defence and Interior. He shared the concerns raised by the RTGoNU representative that some parts of the Agreement cannot be implemented, underscoring the importance of making sure that the implementation of the R-ARCSS ends without any extension. Previous extensions were due to failure to achieve issues of security in which some of the delays manifested themselves in the insecurity that the country was facing. The good spirit which the President showed during his speech, clearly demonstrates that he does not want any extension of the transition and has always been consistent that he would not take the country to war. However, the recent Presidential Decree where Parties could not agree on a mechanism to address the violation becomes challenging. The parties must help the country to transit to a democracy.
- 11.23 **SPLM/A-IO:** Another member observed that members had equal rights to express their views freely without intimidation or threats and hoped that would be a new a start to effectively contribute to these forums. As per Articles 1.13.1 and 1.13.2 regarding the replacement and removal of a Minister in government, there is need for consensus in decision making. He was however disappointed by the Decree but commended the Sudan delegation and Ethiopian Prime Minister in engaging the Parties to find consensus amicably. The appointment of the Minister of Defence was a violation to the R-ARCSS and a setback to the SPLM/A-IO. In this regard, IGAD and the international community should engage and assist the parties in resolving the matter. The prerequisite for elections must be addressed and implemented starting with the operationalisation of the Political Parties Act and the Constitutional-making Process Act which require the political will of political leaders. He urged for the creation of a conducive environment for the registration and return of the refugees and IDPs in their areas by addressing impediments such as insecurity caused by inter-communal violence. Additionally, census needs to be conducted as parties would not agree on the use of the previously contested census. The SPLM/A-IO reaffirmed their

commitment to the implementation of the R-ARCSS. Finally, he called on the Minister to withdraw a statement taken out of context that the SPLM/A-IO may withdraw from the R-ARCSS.

- 11.24 **RTGoNU:** The Members of Parliament (MPs) were back from their constituencies where they had collected the critical views of their people and issues observed from their constituencies. and that the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs committed that the RTNLA would discuss the speech of the President and pass it into law. The RTNLA and Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs will look into the Bills submitted to the Parliament to be tabled and passed as planned. She appealed to the members of the SPLM/A-IO not to boycott the RTNLA due to the current political development in the country. On another note, he observed that South Sudanese in various parts of the country are facing serious hunger.
- 11.25 **RJMEC:** The RJMEC wrote to the RTGoNU to pay the incentives of the NCAC as well as to engage the NTC Chairperson to avail funding to all the mechanisms. In that regard, he requested the RTGoNU representative to provide a response on funding.
- 11.26 **ITGoNU:** The constitution-making process is an on-going process despite having been assented to law by the President. The delay is caused by the RTNLA. The process had to first be tabled before the Council of States and the RTNLA. This delayed the Bill from being assented to by the President. The Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs wrote to the Parties to submit the names of their nominees for reconstitution of the NCRC. The concern that election may not happen means the members were starting to create objection that elections would happen. There is lack of clarity on the type of federalism which suits the South Sudan context.
- 11.27 On the Rome talks, members could not agree on the agenda on the table where the holdout groups stated that the RTGoNU terms had expired hence the need to renegotiate the Agreement. The RTGoNU clarified that the holdout groups were part of the R-ARCSS hence the need to proceed and acknowledge the extension of the R-ARCSS by 24 months. It was expected that the Rome talks would proceed soon. That notwithstanding, the RTGoNU's position is that the R-ARCSS should not be opened for a renegotiation.
- 11.28 RJMEC wrote to the RTGoNU to address the issue of funding faced by all the mechanisms.
- 11.29 The RTGoNU was committed to conduct elections at the end of the Transitional Period as planned. Further, it intends to disseminate the Roadmap to the people of South Sudan through various media, including radio and field visits. Furthermore, the ITGoNU will continue engagements with the regional guarantors on the political development in the country. Also, the principals were engaging to find an amicable solution. The R-ARCSS was defective in that it does not stipulate clearly in case the President finds a Minister not to be performing his/her responsibilities effectively and how the President would resolve the issue, akin to the current impasse. He expressed his optimism that the issue would be resolved amicably.
- 11.30 **SDSR-B:** Demanded for a clarification from the ITGoNU representative on where the former Minister of Defence had failed in her responsibilities.
- 11.31 **SPLM/A-IO:** There are people who feel that elections should not happen unless the R-ARCSS is implemented in letter and spirit. The R-ARCSS is not defective and not silent on the removal / replacement of a Minister. This is clearly stated in Articles 1.13.1 and 1.13.2 respectively and should be followed, that is, each Party is responsible for removing its members. The environment that created such feelings emanated from the experience of 2013. The Ministry of Federal Affairs worked hard despite challenges and succeeded to develop a Federal Policy direction to help the government to structure the type of government that it would embark on by structuring the federal structure at state, and national levels. Federalism is a national concern which the President also

stated clearly that it was the demand of the people, and he wants to make sure that it was achieved. People need to be sensitized to understand the advantages of having a federal system. The Federal Policy was passed by the Council of Ministers and awaited tabling and ratification by the Parliament.

- 11.32 **JDB:** The ITGoNU, SPLM/A-IO and SSOA principals reached out to the Saint'Egidio to facilitate the talks with the holdout groups. However, the expectation of the holdout group was that the Rome initiative was a complimentary process that was meant to reopen the R-ARCSS. The Rome peace process is divided into two groups: one is led by Pagan Amum and Paul Malong and the other by Gen Thomas Cirilo, being the SSOMA group which had previously engaged with the government and signed several agreements. However, more recently, SSOMA changed its name, and this compelled the President to stop its engagement with the group. The ITGoNU requested to start from where the Agreements had reached but the holdout group came with a new agenda which resulted in its adjournment. The RTGoNU intends to share and release what transpired to the public to minimise the rumours perpetuated by the holdout group.
- 11.33 **NTC:** The interest and the mandate of the NTC is to avail funds to the mechanisms. The board of the NTC was established with membership from all the Parties to the R-ARCSS. However, if the Minister of Finance does not attend the meeting it was difficult for NTC to discuss the availability of funds to be availed to the mechanisms.
- 11.34 **RJMEC:** The RJMEC mandate requires it to report to IGAD once the parties declare that the current political situation has resulted in a deadlock. IGAD tried to facilitate and support an internal mediation on the recent political development.
- 11.35 **RTGoNU:** For the NTC to receive funding, it should submit its budget to the RTGoNU for approval. The member promised to follow up on the issue and to report findings to the next plenary. He also observed that the plenary was not the right forum to discuss the issue of the removal of the Minister of Defence.
- 11.36 **SPLM/A-IO:** When the Minister of Defense was relieved from duties, there was no consultation for the removal and no reason was given for it. The SPLM/A-IO Minister was not removed because she had failed. Therefore, he cautioned the member who raised the justification for the removal, to cease misleading the plenary since it was clear that the removal and swapping was a violation of the R-ARCSS.
- 11.37 **Women Coalition:** The removal of a female minister and replacing her with a male minister is contrary to the 35% participation of women in executive positions.

Min. 12/28/23: Review of the Resolution

- 12 The draft Resolution of the 28th RJMEC Plenary was jointly reviewed and adopted. The RJMEC Secretariat was tasked to circulate the final version to all the members.

Min. 13/28/23: Date for the Next Meeting

- 13 It was agreed that the 29th RJMEC plenary meeting would be held on Thursday, 11th May 2023.

Min. 14/28/23: A.O.B

- 14 There was no AOB.

Min. 15/28/23: Chairperson's Closing Remarks

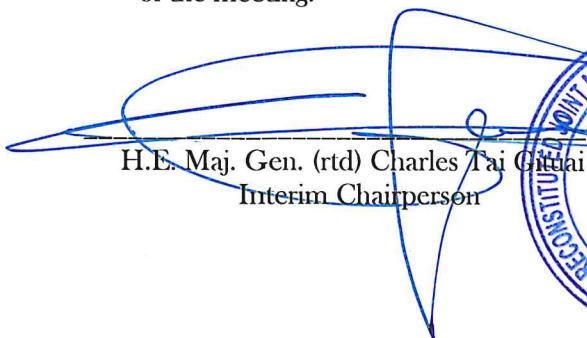
- 15 The Chairperson appealed to the Parties to inform their members in CTSAMVM to return to work to support the work of the CTSAMVM in verifying alleged violations. The Parties need to resolve their political issues through collegiality and consensus. On the critical issue of funding, he expected the RTGoNU to report on the status of funding the Agreement Institutions and Mechanisms in the next plenary. The Parties were also urged to work collectively. He appealed to the RTGoNU to find the best ways to support humanitarian agencies at this critical time of need. The RTGoNU should also invite the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs to present to the next plenary a report on the constitution-making process.

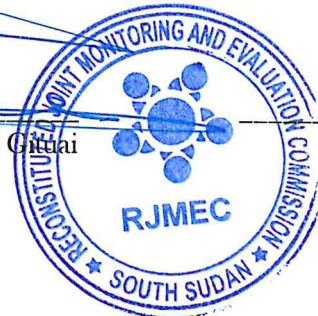
Min.16/28/23: Closing Prayers

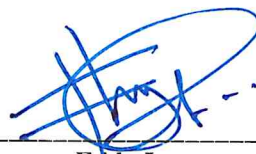
- 16 The representative of the faith-based organizations led the closing prayer. There being no other business, the 28th RJMEC monthly meeting was adjourned at 14:49 hours.

Min.17/28/23: Adoption of the Minutes

- 17 The minutes of the 28th RJMEC meeting are adopted as follows:
- 17.1. Proposer: Mr. Ahmed A. Hersi, IGAD Office of the Special Envoy
- 17.2. Secunder: Mrs. Yar Manoa Majok, Business Community and Chamber of Commerce
- 18 The minutes are hereby proposed, seconded, and adopted by the aforementioned, as the true record of the meeting.

 H.E. Maj. Gen. (rtd) Charles Tai Githai
Interim Chairperson



 Frida Lyaruu
Secretary to the Plenary